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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/074,449	02/13/2002	Edward T. LeBreton	32285	8968

116 7590 10/12/2006

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EXAMINER

STAIKOVICI, STEFAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1732

DATE MAILED: 10/12/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/074,449

Applicant(s)

LEBRETON ET AL.

Examiner

Stefan Staicovici

Art Unit

1732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 July 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 24-32, 35-42, 44 and 45 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 24-32 and 38-42 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 35-37, 44-45 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. Applicants' amendment filed July 20, 2006 has been entered. Claims 1-20, 24-32, 35-42 and 44-45 are pending in the instant application.

Priority

2. Applicant's claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) is acknowledged. However, the provisional application upon which priority is claimed fails to provide adequate support under 35 U.S.C. 112. Specifically, the limitation of a hollow preform comprised of a "plurality of discrete reinforcing fibers intimately intermixed with a plurality of discrete thermoplastic fibers" does not appear to be supported by provisional application 60/271,289 from which the instant application claim priority. As such, the effective filing date for the instant application is considered February 13, 2002.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 36 and 37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 36 recites the limitation "the thermoplastic material" in line 24.

There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Claim 37 is rejected as a dependent claim.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 35-36 and 44-45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wiltshire (US Patent No. 4,101,254) in view of Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1).

Wiltshire ('254) teaches the basic claimed process for making a hollow, fiber-reinforced composite article including, forming two end preforms and a central preform from glass fibers, assembling said preforms and positioning them in a cylindrical mold, inserting a flexible bag inside the preforms, inflating the bag to compress the preforms against the mold, impregnating the preforms with resin, further compressing the preforms to distribute the resin, curing the resin and removing the inflatable bag to form the hollow, fiber-reinforced composite article (see col. 1, lines 10-24).

Regarding claims 35-36 and 44-45, Wiltshire ('254) does not teach a thermoplastic resin. However, the use of a thermoplastic resin to form a fiber-reinforced thermoplastic product is well known as evidenced by Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) who teaches providing a thermoplastic resin onto glass fibers to form a preform and then molding the preform under heat

and pressure to distribute the molten thermoplastic material (see ¶¶ 9-10, 27, 31 and 43). Therefore, it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the thermoplastic resin of Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) to the performs in the process of Wiltshire ('254) in favor of the thermosetting resin because, Evans (US 2003/0054150 A1) specifically teaches that such thermoplastic material is an ideal replacement for thermosetting resin because it provides for reduced processing time, reduced porosity in the final product, hence providing for an improved process and resulting molded product.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 1-20, 24-32 and 38-42 are allowed.
8. Claim 37 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Response to Arguments

9. Applicants' arguments filed July 20, 2006 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

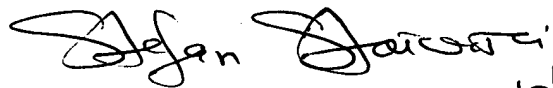
Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stefan Staicovici, Ph.D. whose telephone number is (571) 272-1208. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christina Johnson, can be reached on (571) 272-1176. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Stefan Staicovici, PhD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stefan Staicovici', is written over the printed name.

Primary Examiner

10/2/06

AU 1732

October 2, 2006